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SUBJECT: FRANCE UNLIKELY TO GRANT FURTHER DEBT RELIEF TO IRAQ

REF: STATE 181094

[¶1.](#) (SBU) Embassy raised reftel points on Iraqi debt forgiveness with the head of France's Inter-ministerial Mission for Iraq Reconstruction, Ambassador Jean-Pierre Guinhut, on November 6. Guinhut said there would be considerable resistance to going beyond the 80% forgiveness France had committed to at the Paris Club. That Iraq is an oil-producing country had made it difficult to secure initial agreement to debt relief. Going to 100% was highly unlikely.

[¶2.](#) (SBU) Guinhut thought two issues were particularly critical to ICI success: 1) prioritization ("operationalization") of topics raised in the Compact; 2) Iraqi political leadership would have to step up and make things happen ("DPM Salih must give orders now"). The ICI would have to bring about tangible results quickly in order to give encouragement to the Iraqi people.

[¶3.](#) (SBU) Looking ahead, Guinhut said France likely would follow the lead of EU partners in determining the level of GOF representation at the ICI ministerial.

STAPLETON